

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 06026 031711Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/059 W

-----065634 032238Z /65

R 031613Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2496
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
USMISSION NATO
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PO
SUBJECT: DEMOCRATS RESPOND TO PCP DECLARATIONS

REF: LISBON 5994 (DTG 021806Z AUG 77)

SUMMARY: THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES CONTINUE TO REACT TO THE
PCP'S CALL FOR THE SUSPENSION OF RECENT LEGISLATION, THE
DISSOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, AND ELECTIONS
WITHIN 90 DAYS. CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL DESCRIBED
THE PCP OFFENSIVE AS AN "IMPORTANT VICTORY FOR ALL THREE
DEMOCRATIC PARTIES" WHICH HAVE SUCCEEDED IN ISOLATING THE
COMMUNISTS. THE HAND OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION HAS BEEN
STRENGTHENED. ANY PCP CALL TO THE STREETS WILL BE MET BY
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PAGE 02 LISBON 06026 031711Z

FIRM RESISTANCE FROM THE PRESIDENT, THE SOARES GOVERNMENT
AND THE ARMED FORCES. END SUMMARY

1. THE DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO RESPOND: AUG 2 PARTY REACTION TO
THE PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE PROPOSALS INCLUDED:
-- SOCIALISTS: PS PARLIAMENTARY LEADER SALGADO ZENHA SAID
IT WAS ABSURD TO BELIEVE PRESIDENT EANES WOULD EVEN CONSIDER

SUSPENDING LEGISLATION PASSED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
IN RESPONSE TO EXTRAPARLIAMENTARY PRESSURES--WHETHER PRESS
CONFERENCE PROCLAMATIONS OR THE ACTIVITIES OF PARTISAN
AGITATORS.

-- SOCIAL DEMOCRATS: PSD VICE PRESIDENT RUI MACHETE DESCRIBED
THE PCP PROPOSALS AS DESTABILIZING AND ANTIDEMOCRATIC DEMANDS
WHICH CHALLENGE THE LEGITIMACY OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. IT IS NOT, NE CONTINUED, THE ASSEMBLY'S
FAULT THAT THE MINORITY GOVERNMENT HAS THUS FAR BEEN UNABLE
TO PULL THE COUNTRY OUT OF THE CURRENT CRISIS.

-- CENTER DEMOCRATS: CDS PRESIDENT FREITAS DO AMARAL
DESCRIBED THE PCP PROPOSALS AS AN UNACCEPTABLE CHALLENGE
TO THE PRESIDENT AND CONTRARY TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST.
ACCORDING TO AMARAL, THE PCP PROPOSALS REPRESENT AN
"IMPORTANT VICTORY FOR THE THREE PRINCIPAL DEMOCRATIC
PARTIES" WHICH BY THEIR ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF
DEMOCRACY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN ISOLATING THE PCP.

2. PCP TRIES TO KEEP UP THE STEAM: AT A PCP RALLY LATE
AUGUST 2, CUNHAL CRITICIZED ALL THREE PARTIES FOR THEIR
FEAR OF ELECTIONS, CHARACTERIZED THE CDS AS UNPREPARED FOR
A PUBLIC TEST OF THEIR POLICIES, CLAIMED THAT THE SOCIALISTS
HAVE AS GREAT A FEAR OF THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE AS THE CDS
HAS OF ABSENTEEISM, AND REPEATED HIS CHARGE THAT THE PS HAS
BECOME AN ACKNOWLEDGED TOOL OF THE EXTREME RIGHT. CUNHAL
CLAIMED THAT THE PS, PSD, AND CDS HAVE SHOWN THEIR TRUE COLORS
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PAGE 03 LISBON 06026 031711Z

BY REFUSING TO TAKE THEIR CASE TO THE POLLS.

3. THE ARMED FORCES TO THE DEFENSE: IN WEEKEND COMMENTS
PRECEEDING THE RELEASE OF THE PCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE'S PROPOSALS,
GENERAL HUGO DOS SANTOS, EANES'S HANDPICKED COMMANDER OF THE
CENTRAL MILITARY REGION, WARNED THAT THE ARMED FORCES WOULD
NOT TOLERATE EXTRACONSTITUTIONAL OPPOSITION TO LEGISLATION
PASSED BY THE ASSEMBLY. IF INCIDENTS OCCURED, HE SAID THE
ARMED FORCES WOULD KNOW WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE (READ PCP) AND
WOULD NOT HESITATE TO MOVE AGAINST THEM.

4. COMMENT: THE RECENT PCP DECLARATIONS WILL STRENGTHEN THE
HAND OF THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION BY DENYING THE SOARES
GOVERNMENT AN OPTION TO THE LEFT. HOWEVER, IN LIGHT OF THE
STILL CURRENT PS/PSD CONSULTATIVE AGREEMENT AND DEPENDING ON
HOW THE ISSUES ARE DRAWN, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE PSD
AND THE CDS TO ABANDON THE SOARES GOVERNMENT TO FACE THE
COMMUNISTS ALONE. IN THE ASSEMBLY, THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION
IS IN A BETTER POSITION TO EXTRACT CONCESSIONS FROM THE PS
AND WILL NO DOUBT USE THAT LEVERAGE TO THE FULLEST. AS
DOS SANTOS'S COMMENTS MAKE CLEAR, IF THE PCP AND
THE GOVERNMENT SQUARE OFF, THE LATTER WILL HAVE THE ARMED

FORCES FULL SUPPORT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY LINE, OPPOSITION PARTIES, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LISBON06026
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770278-0566
Format: TEL
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197708102/aaaadiqi.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6b8a144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 LISBON 5994
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30-Aug-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1406512
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEMOCRATS RESPOND TO PCP DECLARATIONS
TAGS: PINT, PO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6b8a144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009